



# CARSON CITIZENS *for* REFORM

P.O. Box 11234 Carson, CA 90749 • Tel: 1-310-549-4219 • ID:1276736

## DISTRICTS YES OR NO?

June 5, 2018	<p>City Council Agenda #37 first reported receipt of the letter from Attorney Kevin Shenkman. Challenging Carson's At Large elections.</p> <p>Unanimous vote to hire a Demographer to obtain statistical facts ie voter patterns etc.</p> <p>On a <b>3 to 2</b> vote Council voted <b>NOT</b> to reveal the results of the Demographer's report to the public. Davis-Holmes, Hicks and Hilton (<b>3</b>) voted <b>YES</b> not to release. Robles and Santarina (<b>2</b>) voted <b>NO</b>.</p> <p>Transparency is the issue and may invite a potential lawsuit. Taxpayers pay for this report and the public is entitled to the report.</p>
May 22, 2018	<p>A letter from the attorney arrived at City Hall asserting violation of California's Voter Rights Act passed in 2002. The letter suggests the court can force the city to switch to Districts if shown that there is racial polarized voting in the city's voting pattern. Liability incurs attorney fees.</p> <p>Under consideration by Carson City Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Option 1: City deny there are Civil Rights Violations and leave voting as is risking going to court.</li><li>• Option 2: Commission a Demographic Study to determine if city has a statistical pattern of violation. After getting the results the City decides what to do.</li><li>• Option 3: Simply switch to Districts by Ordinance.</li></ul>

### FACTS:

- Over 130 cities have switched to Districts.
- Modesto was sued and lost. City went to Districts. City paid \$ 3 million.
- Anaheim was sued and lost. City went to Districts. City paid approximately \$1.2 million dollars.
- Palmdale was sued and lost. City went to Districts. City paid a whopping \$4.5 million.
- Torrance our neighbor to the West was also threatened with CVRA violations. Torrance voluntarily switching to Districts.
- The City must within 30 days receipt of the attorney's letter can pass a resolution stating it will change to District elections then switch within 90 days. Attorney's fees are capped at \$30,000.
- Since 1996 there has not been an elected official that lived South of Carson Street. Although the California Voting Rights Act does not cover geographic issues. By putting in place Districts there would be FAIR representation to correct this problem.
- Currently there are 5 out of 7 elected officials that live within a mile from each other North of Del Amo.
- Costs of running for office would be lowered. Currently for a candidate to successfully defeat an incumbent the cost of the campaign runs just under \$100,000.
- When running for office a winning candidate is usually endorsed/supported by an incumbent or backed by a special interest group. Should someone desire to serve on the City Council the costs would be much lower by covering an area 1/4<sup>th</sup> the size of the City. A candidate can walk a smaller area and meet the voters and not have to spend thousands on slick mailer pieces.